

that this response be accepted as a bona fide effort to meet any potential response requirements outstanding and due in the above captioned matter.

REMARKS

Claims 1 through 18 continue to be in the case.

Claims 1-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention. It is unclear how the invention operates. Applicant describes directions of lift with respect to a denture or implant, however, it is not clearly shown how these elements relate. The operation of element 15 is unclear, for example, how is the stop released.

The mode of operation of the element 15 is as follows:

The mode of operation of the " element 15" is explained and illustrated by way of the embodiment shown in figures 1 through 5. In order to be able to take out the removable tooth replacement, it is necessary that the parts 7 of the locking bar R are moved out of the eye 8 of the web extension of the web S. For this purpose the patient presses with the

fingertip onto the pressure knob D and shifts the locking bar R against the force of this spring F in horizontal direction along the longitudinal axis of the locking bar R. The removable tooth replacement could now be taken out. However for this purpose the pressure knob - as is the case with a "semi automatic locking bar" - would have to furthermore be held down compressed. Here however a " fully automatic locking bar" is of concern, where the pressure knob can be released prior to a taking out of the prosthesis. Therefore the arresting device A is required, which retains the locking bar against the force of this spring even after releasing the pressure knob. The force of this spring F and/or the motion of the locking bar R effect the shifting of the bolt B also in the horizontal direction along the longitudinal axis of the locking bar. This horizontal shifting of the bolt B is deflected through an inclined face 10 in such a manner that a vertical motion of the arresting device A in basal direction relative to the locking bar R results. The new and in basal direction shifted position of the arresting device A is illustrated in figure 2: the stop face 6 of the arresting device A retains the locking bar R firm now at its stop face 14 against the force of the

spring F. Since the arresting device A with its basal stop face 11 rests on a corresponding stop face at the base of the eye 8 of the locking bar, the vertical motion of the arresting device relative to the locking bar R in basal direction through these stop faces in reality effects a slight lifting off the connection element in opposite direction, that is the pullout direction of the prosthesis. This basal stop face 11 at the arresting device A and the corresponding face at the foundation of the eye 8 of the locking bar are of concern, but clearly not the face 15, when the last partial clause of claim 1 refers to " stop faces" with respect to the first embodiment.

With respect to the four other remaining embodiments the designation "stop faces" in the last part clause of claim 1 refers to the stop faces 24,32,36 and 45 as well as the corresponding faces at the fixedly disposed element S. This becomes clear from the context of the sub claims 5 and 10. Therefore the designation " stop faces" in the last part clause of claim 1 refers to the stop faces 11,24,32,36 and 45 as well as to their corresponding faces at the fixedly disposed element. It is possible that the term " limit stop face" could be replaced by a better term in order to avoid any connotation that a motion would be limited or stopped with this face called "limit stop

face". The technical realization has shown that a value of about 0.2 mm to 0.3 mm is practical for the vertical motion of the arresting device relative to the locking bar in basal direction and thus also for the slight lifting of the prosthesis. The arresting device A with the stop face 15 is disposed in the locking bar and rests with the stop face 16 at the bolt in the in basal direction shifted position relative to the locking bar. It is an object of the stop face 15 as well as of the stop face 16 to limit the vertical motion of the arresting device A in basal direction and to prevent a falling out of the arresting device in basal direction out of the locking bar. The stop face 15 does not have a further meaning in particular with respect to claim 1.

The Office Action refers to Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103. Claims 1-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Romagnoli (4345901). Romagnoli shows a connecting element having a slidable locking bar 13, Fig. 5, spring 15 and push button 14. The disengagement of 13c from groove 6 will obviously release inherent tension between the elements and effect a slight lifting. The specific shape of the inferentially claimed denture or tooth or implant is given no patentable weight. The process of making the elements is an obvious matter of choice in process steps used to obtain an obvious structure to one of ordinary skill

in the art. The specific shape of the elements is an obvious matter of choice in the shape of known structure to the skilled artisan.

The rejection is respectfully traversed.

The applicant notes with respect to the United States patent 4,545,901 to Romagnoli:

It appears that this connection device provides only a so-called "semi automatic locking bar". An arresting device, which would hold the bolt during the taking out of the prosthesis, is not provided according to the Romagnoli reference. This has the consequence that the patient is required to maintain the pressure knob pressed down during the taking out of the prosthesis. In case two such support elements left and right have to be applied, as is the case in most situations, then the handling by the patient is rendered substantially more difficult. The arresting device as claimed in claim 1 therefore clearly represents an inventive novelty relative to the teaching of the reference Romagnoli.

According to the semi automatic locking bar of the reference Romagnoli, the locking bar is moved against the force of a spring over an

inclined face, which inclined face is disposed at the fixedly disposed part, and in the following again set back by the spring force. It has to be considered a disadvantage in connection with the reference Romagnoli that wear based on friction can occur in the region of this inclined face. Since this inclined face is disposed at that part of the tooth replacement, which part is fixedly attached in the mouth, therefore an exchange of this part for repair purposes is not possible.

The present application in contrast to the reference Romagnoli presents a "fully automatic locking bar". The locking bar is held firm against the force of this spring by an arresting device after pressure exertion on the pressure knob in case of a fully automatic locking bar, such that the pressure knob can be released for the taking out of the prothesis. This feature substantially alleviates the handling by the patient.

The five embodiments of the present Invention comprise an additional advantage relative to the connection element of the reference Romagnoli that no friction and therefore no wear occurs at the fixedly disposed part, where the fixedly disposed part is inaccessible to a repair.

In conclusion the advantages of the present Invention relative to the connection device of the reference Romagnoli are as follows:

-A fully automatic locking bar is provided instead of the semi automatic locking bar: the locking bar is retained such against the force of the spring based on the newly invented arresting device that the pressure knob can be released for taking out of the prosthesis. This alleviates the handling by the patient substantially.

-No friction and therefore no wear occurs during insertion of the prosthesis, at least in connection with the five embodiments illustrated in the present application.

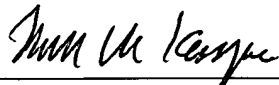
Applicant submits that the prior art made of record neither anticipates nor renders obvious the present invention.

Reconsideration of all outstanding rejections is respectfully requested.

All claims as presently submitted are deemed to be in form for allowance and an early notice of allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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